

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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P R 301651Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6596
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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USNATO BRUSSELS 1059

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 MADRID 5883

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: POST MORTEMES

1. AS WITH MOST POLITICAL MATTERS IN SPAIN, THERE ARE COUNTLESS VARIATIONS ON ONE THEME AND THE STORY OF THE DISMISSAL OF ARIAS AND THE SELECTION OF SUAREZ IS NO EXCEPTION. AREILZA'S VERSION IS BUT ONE, ALTHOUGH HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN GIVING IT RATHER WIDE DISSEMINATION HERE AND ABROAD. WHICH VERSION--OR COMBINATION OF VERSIONS (OUR PREFERENCE)--ONE ACCEPTS DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN RESPECT OF WHAT MAY HAPPEN, MAKING WORTHWHILE ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO UNRAVEL THE COMPLICATED SKEIN OF CAUSES AND AMBITIONS THAT UNDERLIE THE WHOLE AFFAIR.

2. THREE FACTS IMMEDIATELY STAND OUT.

A. THE KING NEVER WANTED ARIAS IN THE FIRST PLACE, BUT HAD TO KEEP HIM SINCE HE COULD NOT AFFORD ANOTHER DIFFICULT STRUGGLE WITH THE ENTRENCHED RIGHT, HAVING WON HIS WAY ON THE DESIGNATION OF FERNANDEZ MIRANDA AS CORTES
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PRESIDENT. IT WAS AN OPEN SECRET THAT THE KING WAS DISSATISFIED

WITH ARIAS FROM MANY VIEW POINTS, AND IT WAS THEREFORE ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE GOT RID OF HIM. THIS DISSATISFACTION WAS FANNED BY FERNANDEZ MIRANDA, BY LOPEZ BRAVO AND BY MANY OTHERS;

B. THE ECONOMIC SITUATION HAS INDEED BEEN DETERIORATING AND BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL CIRCLES OF VARIOUS PERSUASIONS HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY CONCERNED. THE CONCERN WAS WIDESPREAD AND NOT THE MONOPOLY OF ANY ONE GROUP;

C. THE SUAREZ GOVERNMENT IS IN FACT NOT AN OPUS DEI GOVERNMENT (ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SEVERAL MINOR OPUS FIGURES THEREIN, AND WE HAD UNCONFIRMED REPORTS THAT THE KING HAD INSTRUCTED SUAREZ NOT TO PUT IN THE CABINET FRANCOITES, OR CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE OPUS MEMBERS). INSTEAD, IT IS ONE IN WHICH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS ARE PREDOMINANT (OF BOTH THE CONSERVATIVE UDE AND THE MORE PROGRESSIVE TACITO PERSUASION). THE SPANISH CDS ARE IN DISAGREEMENT WITH THE OPUS AND PARTICULARLY WITH MOST OF THE LOPEZES WHO ARE THE VILLAINS OF AREILZA'S VERSION.

3. WITH THIS BACKGROUND, WE CAN LOOK AT THE MAIN VERSIONS:

-- THE "OPUS" THEORY-- AREILZA'S VERSION IS THAT AN OPUS CABAL (LED BY THE LOPEZES) PLOTTED ARIAS' DOWNFALL, HIS REPLACEMENT BY SUAREZ AND THE INSTALLATION OF AN OPUS CABINET, AND THE LATTER FAILED BECAUSE OF THE REFUSAL OF AREILZA AND FRAGA TO STAY.

11 THE "MILITARY THEORY-- ALTHOUGH I HAVE NOT YET HAD THE KING'S FULL VERSION, HE DID STRESS IN A CONVERSATION WITH ME AND SENATOR JAVITS ON JULY 9 THAT HE HAD BEEN WARNED TOWARD THE END OF JUNE ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF ADVERSE MILITARY REACTION TO THE EXPECTED ESPOUSAL BY THE ARIAS GOVERNMENT AT THE THEN -SCHEDULED JULY 6 SESSION OF THE CORTES OF THE LIBERAL ALTERNATIVE (THE QUOTE PLURALIST UNQUOTE FORMULA) FOR THE PENAL CODE'S PROVISION TO EXCLUDE, FOR THE TIME-BEING AT LEAST, THE COMMUNIST PARTY FROM LEGALITY. THE MILITARY THEORY ALSO RESTS ON THE DISTRUST WITHIN THE SENIOR MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT FOR AREILZA (AND, INCREASINGLY FOR FRAGA) BECAUSE OF HIS OPPORTUNISTIC QUALITIES AND HIS ACTIVE CONTACTS WITH THE ENTIRE RANGE OF THE OPPOSITION, INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS.J
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--"THE REFORM PROCESS IS IN TROUBLE" THEORY
RESTS ON THE FACT THAT THE PENAL CODE FRACAS SHOWED THE CORTES WITH ITS ENTRENCHED RIGHT ORIENTATION BECOMING INCREASINGLY UNMANAGEABLE, THAT THE PARLIAMENTARY REFORM SCHEME THEN BEING PREPARED BY THE ARIAS GOVERNMENT LOOKED INCREASINGLY UNWORKABLE (WITH INCREASING CRITICISM FROM THE RIGHT, THE OPPOSITION AND EVEN WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT) AND THAT ALL THIS LED TO THE DISTURBING PROSPECT THAT THE ARIAS FORMULA WOULD GET

THE MONARCHY IN TROUBLE INSTEAD OF GRANTING LEGITIMACY TO THE PROCESS. IN ADDITION, ARIAS LACKED LEADERSHIP AND THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF LACKED COHESION, UNITY AND DISCIPLINE. IN SUM, ALL THE REASONS THAT HAD LED LIBERALS TO SEEK ARIAS' REMOVAL.

-- THE "ECONOMIC SITUATION IS OUT OF HAND THEORY" ASCRIBES ARIAS' REPLACEMENT TO PRESSURES FROM THE BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL ESTABLISHMENT (INCLUDING, BUT NOT JUST THE LOPEZ-TECHNOCRAT CONTINGENT) CONCERNED WITH THE DETERIORATING ECONOMY, ANNOYED BY VILLAR MIR'S POLICIES AND ARIAS' SUPPORT OF HIM.

4. TO SORT THIS OUT REQUIRES SOME DEMYTHIFICATION OF THE OPUS- THE HARD TO FATHOM SEMI-SECRET SOCIETY OF CATHOLIC LAYMENT WHOSE QUOTE NUMERARY UNQUOTE MEMBERS (E.G. LOPEZ RODO, THE PERENNIAL FRANCO-ERA MINISTER NOW AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA WHO POLITICKS HERE MUCH OF THE TIME) TAKE VOWS OF POVERTY, CHASTITY AND OBEDIENCE. THERE ARE LESS ASCETIC DEGREES OF ASSOCIATION E.G. LOPEZ BRAVO, THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER PICKED BY FERNANDEZ MIRANDA TO HEAD THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM COMMITTEE, AND LOPEZ DE LETONA, FORMER MINISTER OF INDUSTRY. THE LATTER LOPEZ-THE MAN WHOM THE KING INITIALLY WANTED AS PRIME MINISTER AFTER FRANCO' DEATH-RECENTLY DENIED OPUS MEMBERSHIP BUT IS WIDELY REGARDED AS AN OPUS MEMBER.

-- THE LOPEZ TECHNOCRATS, WHO WERE--UNTIL ARIAS KICKED THEM OUT AFTER CARRERO BLANCO'S DEATH--ONE OF THE MAIN POWRE BLOCS OF FRANCOISM, ARE USUALLY THOUGHT OF AS SYNONOMOUS WITH THE OPUS. HOWEVER, CALVO SERER AND MEILAN GIL, TO NAME BUT TWO OTHER OPUS MEMBERS, HAVE ESPOUSED RATHER DIFFERENT POLITICAL VIEWS, THE FIRST AS BEDFELLOW IN THE COMMUNIST DOMINATED JUNTA DEMOCRATICA AND THE SECOND--THOUGH CONSIDERED A TECHNOCRAT--HAS BEEN A LIBERAL APERTURISTA IN THE CORTES.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P R 301651Z JUL 76

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6597

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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USNATO BRUSSELS 1060

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 MADRID 5883

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: POST MORTEMES

-- THE ELITIST, CURIOUSLY CALVINIST PHILOSOPHY OF THE OPUS
AND THE NEEDED ECONOMIC EXPERTISE OF SOME
OPUS MEMBERS MET SPAIN'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS IN THE
SIXTIES AND WAS ENTIRELY COMPATIBLE WITH THE AUTHORITARIAN
IDEOLOGY OF THE FRANCO ERA. SPAIN'S ECONOMIC PROGRESS WHICH
CONTRIBUTED TO THE CREATION OF NEW SOCIOLOGICAL STRUCTURES
BROUGHT POWER AND WEALTH TO THE TECHNOCRATS AND TO THEIR ASSOCIATES
AND THEIR SUPPORTERS. EVENTUALLY CORRUPTION, E.G. THE MATESA
AFFAIR, ALSO TOUCHED THE OPUS (AND LOPEZ BRAVO).
-- BEYOND THE OPPROBRIUM OF THE LEFT WHO GRANT THE OPUS THE
SAME MYTHICAL STATURE STILL ACCORDED BY THE RIGHT TO FREE-
MASONRY, THE OPUS TECHNOCRATS HAVE BEEN FAR FROM CONGENIAL
TO THE SPANISH CHURCH, IMBUED WITH THE SPIRIT OF VATICAN II.
THE SPANISH EPISCOPATE, FAR FROM BACKING THE OPUS, SUBTLY
FOSTERED THROUGH THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC
SECTORS MORE IN TUNE WITH THE RECENT SOCIAL DOCTRINES OF THE
CHURCH AND CONCERNED WITH POLITICAL FREEDOMS.
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5. IN SUM, THE OPUS TECHNOCRATS ARE BUT ONEPRESSURE GROUP,
THOUGH THEY HAVE CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE IN THE BUSINESS AND
FINANCIAL COMMUNITY AND ALLIES, LIKE FERNANDEZ MIRANDA, CLOSE
TO THE KING. THEY ALSO HAVE MANY ENEMIES, AND AS OREJA POINTED
OUT TO ME, THE TECHNOCRATS' RETURN TO POWER WOULD HAVE BEEN
INCONSISTENT WITH THE IMAGE THE KING HAS CONSISTENTLY SOUGHT
TO PORTRAY, NOR WOULD THEY HAVE BEEN COMPATIBLE WITH THE RETENTION
OF AREILZA AND FRAGA. MOST EVERYONE, THE KING, AREILZA, FRAGA,
THE OPUS, THE BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT, THE PRESS, THE LEFT
OPPOSITION, EVEN THE MODERATE RIGHT, WANTED ARIAS OUT, THE
ARGUMENT BEING ABOUT WHEN AND WHO. AREILZA'S ACCOUNT OF THE
LOPEZES' ENMITY TOWARD ARIAS, FRAGA AND HIMSELF IS ACCURATE.
THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THE TECHNOCRATS AGITATED
AMONG THE BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL ESTABLISHMENT
FOR A CHANGE AND HOPED TO BE THE PRINCIPAL BENE-
FICIARIES, BUT THEY WERE NOT. NOR WERE AREILZA AND
FRAGA, WHO AGREED BEFORE SUAREZ WAS CHOSEN THAT

EACH WOULD SERVE UNDER THE OTHER. THE AREILZA/
FRAGA VERSION THERE IS MORE THAN A TOUCH OF EGO, FOR
AT BEDROCK AREILZA WAS PASSED OVER (THE OPUS
INTRIGUES ASIDE) BECAUSE OF THE MILITARY ANGLE,
THE KING'S DOUBTS (AS I KNOW THEM) ABOUT AREILZA
AS A PRIME MINISTER AND THE KING'S PREDELECTION
FOR THE YOUNGER SUAREZ.

6. IN SUM, A MIX OF CAUSES-- THE KING'S DESIRE
PLUS THE FOUR VERSIONS ABOVE--WERE AT WORK. TO
WEIGH THEM PRECISELY IS IMPOSSIBLE, BUT WE HAVE GONE
OVER THE GROUND FAIRLY CAREFULLY, AND THINK THE
FOLLOWING SCENARIO REASONABLY ACCURATE.
--THE KING ALWAYS WANTED TO GET RID OF ARIAS,
AND AFTER HIS TRIPS IN THE PROVINCES AND HIS VISIT
TO THE US WAS AT THE TOP OF HIS CLOUD.
--THE ARIAS GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL FOR A NEW
PARLIAMENT AND SCHEME FOR A REFERENDUM HAD SERIOUS
DISABILITIES WHICH IT WAS FEARED WOULD IMPERIL THE
PROCESS AND THE MONARCHY. MOREOVER, THE GOVERNMENT
HAD NO REAL LEADERSHIP.
--THE ECONOMIC SITUATION- PARTICULARLY THE
BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL COMMUNITY'S LACK OF CON-
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FIDENCE (IN WHICH THE OPUS AGITATION PLAYED A
SUBSTANTIAL PART) IN THE ARIAS/VILLAR MIR LINE,
AS EVIDENCED BY GROWING CAPITAL FLIGHT, AND CONCERN
IN THESE SECTORS OVER DETERIORATION OF THE POLITICAL
PROCESS, ALSO ARGUED FOR EARLY CHANGE.
--CONSEQUENTLY, THE KING PLANNED TENTATIVELY TO
GET RID OF ARIAS BY MID-JULY (ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO
PRECISE CONFIRMATION OF THIS), ONCE THE ARIAS
GOVT HAD FINISHED THE LAST TASK IT WAS CAPABLE OF
UNDERTAKING, THE REFORM OF THE PENAL CODE, SET FOR
PASSAGE JULY 6 IN THE CORTES. THE SECRET WAS
CONFINED TO A SMALL GROUP, FERNANDEZ MIRANDA,
SUAREZ, PROBABLY GEN SANTIAGO AND A FEW IN THE
PALACE.
--THE KING HAD SUAREZ IN MIND FROM THE BEGINNING,
BUT WAS WILLING TO KEEP AREILZA AND, PERHAPS (BUT
TO A LESSER EXTENT) FRAGA IN THE CABINET.
-- THE CRISIS PRECIPITATED SUDDENLY (BY ALL ACCOUNTS)
ALMOST CERTAINLY BECAUSE THE MILITARY'S STAND
AGAINST THE PENAL CODE PROVISION ESPOUSED BY THE
ARIAS GOVERNMENT MEANT THE PENAL CODE CHANGES MIGHT
FAIL IN THE CORTES SESSION OF JULY 6, THUS ENDING
THE POSSIBILITY OF REFORM THROUGH THE CORTES AND
CREATING A CONFRONTATION WITH THE MILITARY. THE
MILITARY WERE NOT AFTER ARIAS, BUT IN THE CIRCUM-

STANCES THEY HAD NO REASON TO OBJECT. THUS, THE
KING-RATHER ILL AT EASE IN HIS TASK-FIRED ARIAS
ON JULY 1 INSTEAD OF MID-MONTH.
-- FRAGA NEVER HAD A CHANCE, AND KNEW IT.
REILZA, JUST PRIOR TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUAREZ,
APPARENTLY WAS LED TO BELIEVE (SOME PROFESS TO SEE
FERNANDEZ MIRANDA'S HAND) THAT HE WAS GOING TO BE
IT AND HIS OWN EGO EASILY PLAYED TO THIS. BADLY
HANDLED, HE WENT PUBLIC WITH HIS REFUSAL TO STAY,
AND THE KING REFUSED TO BEG AND DID NOT CALL.
(THE KING DID CALL FRAGA, BUT PROBABLY DID NOT
EXPECT OR PARTICULARLY WANT HIM TO STAY). AREILZA
MAY HAVE HAD SECOND THOUGHTS, BUT THEY WERE NOT ANSWERED.
THOUGH IT WAS NOT DETERMINING, THE
MILITARY'S CONCERN OVER FRAGA AND AREILZA'S
STATEMENTS IMPLYING LEGALIZATION IN A YEAR OR SO OF
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THE COMMUNISTS, WORKED AGAINST THEM.
--AREILZA'S REFUSAL MEANT NEITHER CABANILLAS NOR
ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA, MAJOR FIGURES OF THE PARTIDO
POPULAR, WOULD ENTER, THROWING THE PROCESS INTO
MANIFEST CONFUSION.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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USNATO BRUSSELS 1061

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 MADRID 5883

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: POST MORTEM

7. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE A GOOD MANY ACTORS IN THE "REMOVE ARIAS" OPERATION, I BELIEVE THAT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS THE KING WAS THE PRINCIPAL ACTOR. (STIMULATED AND ABETTED BY FERNANDEZ MIRANDA). HE DECIDED BOTH ON HIS OWN AND UNDER A VARIETY OF PRESSURES, INCLUDING ADVICE FROM HIS FATHER, THAT IF HE DID NOT TAKE MATTERS INTO HIS HANDS, THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIZATION TO WHICH HE HAD COMMITTED HIMSELF WOULD FALTER AND HIS OWN POSITION WOULD SUFFER IN THE CONSEQUENCE. THE OPERATION WAS A CALCULATED RISK. IT GOT RID OF ARIAS AND PUT IN SUAREZ, BUT IT APPARENTLY STUMBLED MORE THAN ANTICIPATED ON THE NAMING OF A NEW CABINET. THIS MAY BE ATTRIBUTED TO A GOOD MANY CAUSES, SUCH AS, THE SUDDEN ONSET OF THE CRISIS, DOUBTS ABOUT SUAREZ BOTH ON THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT, THE DEVIUSNESS OF FERNANDEZ MIRANDA, THE AMBITIONS OF OPUS TECHNOCRATS, THE PREOCCUPATIONS OF THE BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL COMMUNITY, AND THE PREOCCUPATION OF THE MILITARY

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8. IN THE EVENT, AND INTELLIGENT, RELATIVELY COHESIVE CABINET WAS PUT TOGETHER. ITS CIVILIAN COMPONENT IS YOUNG AND NOT LINKED TO THE CIVIL WAR. ITS BASIC DIRECTION IS SOUND--AMNESTY, CONSULTATION WITH ALL SECTORS, ATTENTION TO THE ECONOMY (WITH SPECIFIC MEASURE STILL TO BE ANNOUNCED), IN ALL LIKELIHOOD A NEW APPROACH TO THE REFERENDUM IDEA, THE CREATION OF A NEW PARLIAMENTARY SET UP AND GENERAL ELECTIONS BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, ALL TO BE ACCOMPLISHED NOT LATER THAN JUNE 1977 (THE DATE TO WHICH THE PRESENT CORTES HAS BEEN EXTENDED). BUT THE ENTIRE OPERATION HAS ALSO PRODUCED OTHER EFFECTS. IT HAS PLACED THE KING IN THE FOREFRONT AND HAS SPECIFICALLY ENGAGED HIS PRESTIGE AND AUTHORITY. IT HAS ALSO INJECTED THE MILITARY, ALTHOUGH ON A LIMITED SCALE, MORE DIRECTLY INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT HAS OPENED THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING A CONSENSUAL APPROACH TO REFORM THAT BRINGS THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION INTO THE POLITICAL GAME. IT HAS ALSO PLACED NEW PRESSURES FOR THE FORMATION OF LARGER POLITICAL GROUPINGS IN THE

CENTER IN PREPARATION FOR THE GENERAL ELECTIONS.
THE NEGATIVE ASPECT IS THAT THE CONFUSION WITHIN
THE CENTER HAS, FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, BEEN
HEIGHTENED AS VARIOUS PERSONALITIES AND GROUPS TRY
ONCE AGAIN TO SORT THEMSELVES OUT.
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